

18. (Amended) A method of controlling a vehicle having a first running mode wherein an acceleration/deceleration rate of the vehicle is controlled according to a first target value determined from an accelerator pedal position and a second running mode wherein an acceleration/deceleration rate of the vehicle is controlled according to a second target value determined from at least one environmental operating condition ahead of said vehicle, comprising:

when said first running mode is changed to said second running mode, determining a changing-over time period from said first running mode to said second running mode based on a difference between said first target value calculated in said first running mode and said second target value calculated in said second running mode; and

setting a third target value which varies from said first target value to said second target value in said changing-over time period.

19. (Amended) A method of controlling a vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the acceleration/deceleration rate of the first running mode is controlled to gradually approach said acceleration/deceleration rate of the second running mode by controlling an air/fuel ratio of an engine of said vehicle.

20. (Amended) A method of controlling a vehicle having a first running mode wherein a driving shaft torque of the vehicle is controlled according to a first target value determined from an accelerator pedal position and a second running mode wherein the driving shaft torque of the vehicle is controlled

according to a second target value determined from an environmental operating conditions ahead of said vehicle, comprising:

when said first running mode is changed to said second running mode, determining a changing-over time period from said first running mode to said second running mode based on a difference between said first target value calculated in said first running mode and said second target value calculated in said second running mode; and

setting a third target value which varies from said first target value to said second target value in said changing-over time period.

21. (Amended) A method of controlling a vehicle according to claim 20, wherein the driving shaft torque of the first running mode is controlled to gradually approach said driving shaft torque of the second running mode by controlling an air/fuel ratio of an engine of said vehicle.

22. (Amended) A method of controlling a vehicle having a first running mode wherein an engine torque of the vehicle is controlled according to a first target value determined from an accelerator pedal position and a second running mode wherein the engine torque is controlled according to a second target value determined from an environmental operating conditions ahead of said vehicle, comprising:

when said first running mode is changed to said second running mode, determining a changing-over time period from said first running mode to said second running mode based on a difference between said first target value

calculated in said first running mode and said second target value calculated in said second running mode; and

setting a third target value which varies from said first target value to said second target value in said changing-over time period.

23. (Amended) A method of controlling a vehicle according to claim 22, wherein the target value is controlled to gradually approach said second target value by controlling an air/fuel ratio of the engine of said vehicle.

24. (Amended) A control apparatus for a vehicle having a first running mode wherein an acceleration/deceleration rate of the vehicle is controlled according to a first target value determined from an accelerator pedal position and a second running mode wherein an acceleration/deceleration rate of the vehicle is controlled according to a second target value determined from environmental operating conditions ahead of said vehicle, comprising:

when said first running mode is changed to said second running mode, determining a changing-over time period from said first running mode to said second running mode based on a difference between said first target value calculated in said first running mode and said second target value calculated in said second running mode; and

setting a third target value which varies from said first target value to said second target value in said changing-over time period.

25. (Amended) A control apparatus for a vehicle according to claim 24, wherein the acceleration/deceleration rate is controlled to gradually approach the acceleration/deceleration rate of said second running mode by controlling an air/fuel ratio of an engine of said vehicle.

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26. (Amended) A control apparatus for a vehicle having a first running mode wherein a driving shaft torque of the vehicle is controlled according to a driving shaft torque of the vehicle from an accelerator pedal position and a second running mode wherein the driving shaft torque of the vehicle is controlled according to the second target value determined from environmental operating conditions ahead of said vehicle, comprising:

when said first running mode is changed to said second running mode, determining a changing-over time period from said first running mode to said second running mode based on a difference between said first target value calculated in said first running mode and said second target value calculated in said second running mode; and

setting a third target value which varies from said first target value to said second target value in said changing-over time period.

27. (Amended) A control apparatus for a vehicle according to claim 26, wherein the driving shaft torque is controlled to gradually approach the driving shaft torque of said second running mode by controlling an air/fuel ratio of an engine of said vehicle.

28. (Amended) A control apparatus for a vehicle having a first running mode wherein an engine torque of the vehicle is controlled according to a first target value determined from an accelerator pedal position and a second running mode wherein the engine torque is controlled according to a second target value determined from at least one environmental operating condition ahead of said vehicle, comprising:

when said first running mode is changed to said second running mode, determining a changing-over time period from said first running mode to said second running mode based on a difference between said first target value calculated in said first running mode and said second target value calculated in said second running mode; and

setting a third target value which varies from said first target value to said second target value in said changing-over time period.

29. (Amended) A control apparatus for a vehicle according to claim 28, wherein the target value is controlled to gradually approach said second target value by controlling an air/fuel ratio of an engine of said vehicle.

Add the following new claims:

30. (New) A method of controlling a vehicle having a first running mode wherein a driving force of the vehicle is controlled according to a first target value determined from an accelerator pedal position and a second running mode wherein a driving force of the vehicle is controlled according to a second

target value determined from environmental operating conditions ahead of said vehicle, comprising:

when said first running mode is changed to said second running mode, determining a changing-over time period from said first running mode to said second running mode based on a difference between said first target value calculated in said first running mode and said second target value calculated in said second running mode; and

setting a third target value which varies from said first target value to said second target value in said changing-over time period.

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Concluded.

31. (New) A method according to claim 30, further comprising controlling the driving force according to said third target value until a difference between the second and third target values becomes a predetermined value.

32. (New) A method according to claim 30, wherein said vehicle further has a third running mode wherein the driving force is controlled according to said third target value until a difference between the second and third target values becomes a predetermined value.

REMARKS

The rejection of Claim 22 as being anticipated by Ibamoto et al. under 35 USC § 102(a) is traversed, and reconsideration is requested.

The Ibamoto et al patent shows a plurality of different driving patterns of vehicle speed versus drive shaft torque. Specifically, it teaches that the pattern